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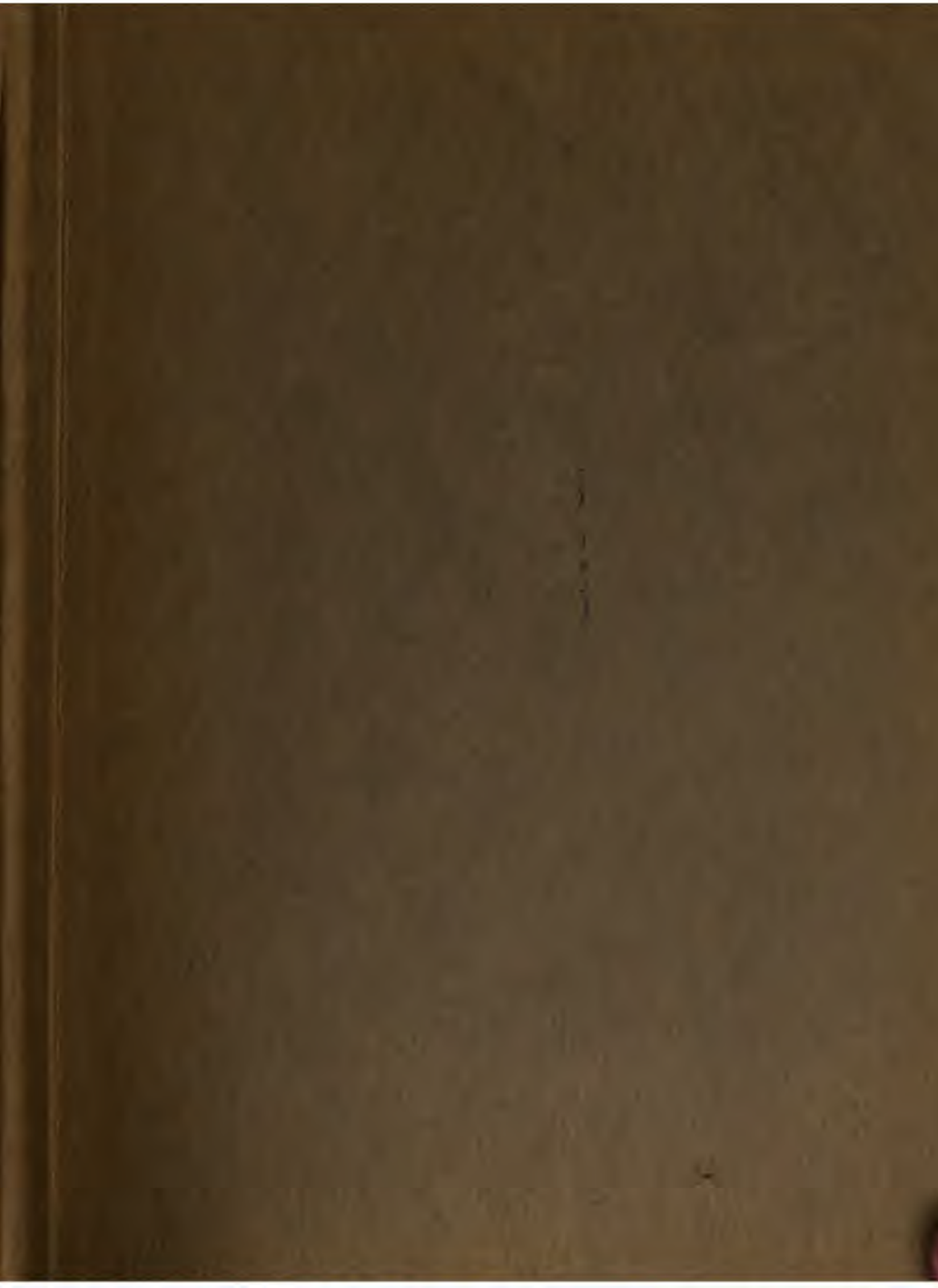
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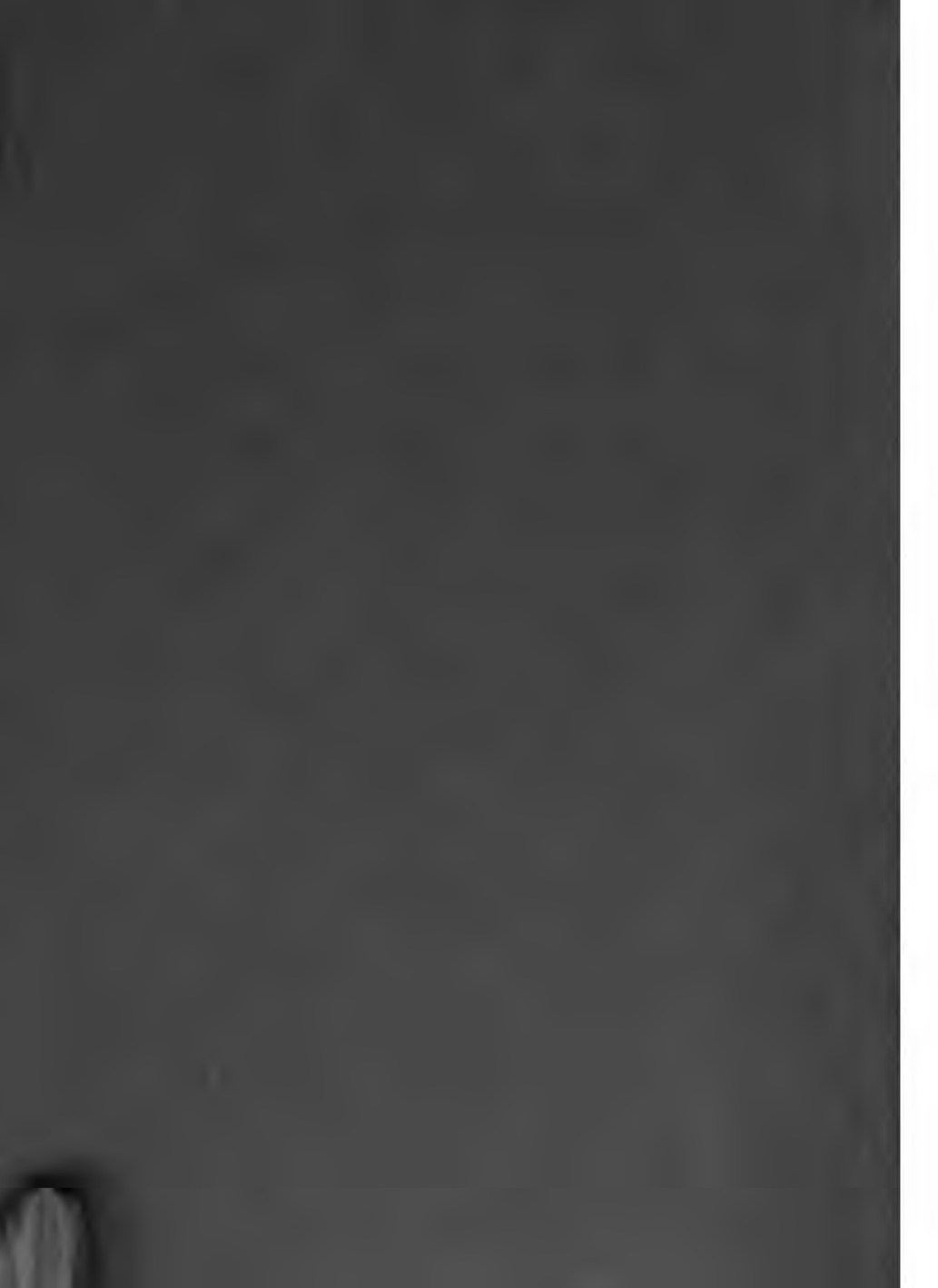
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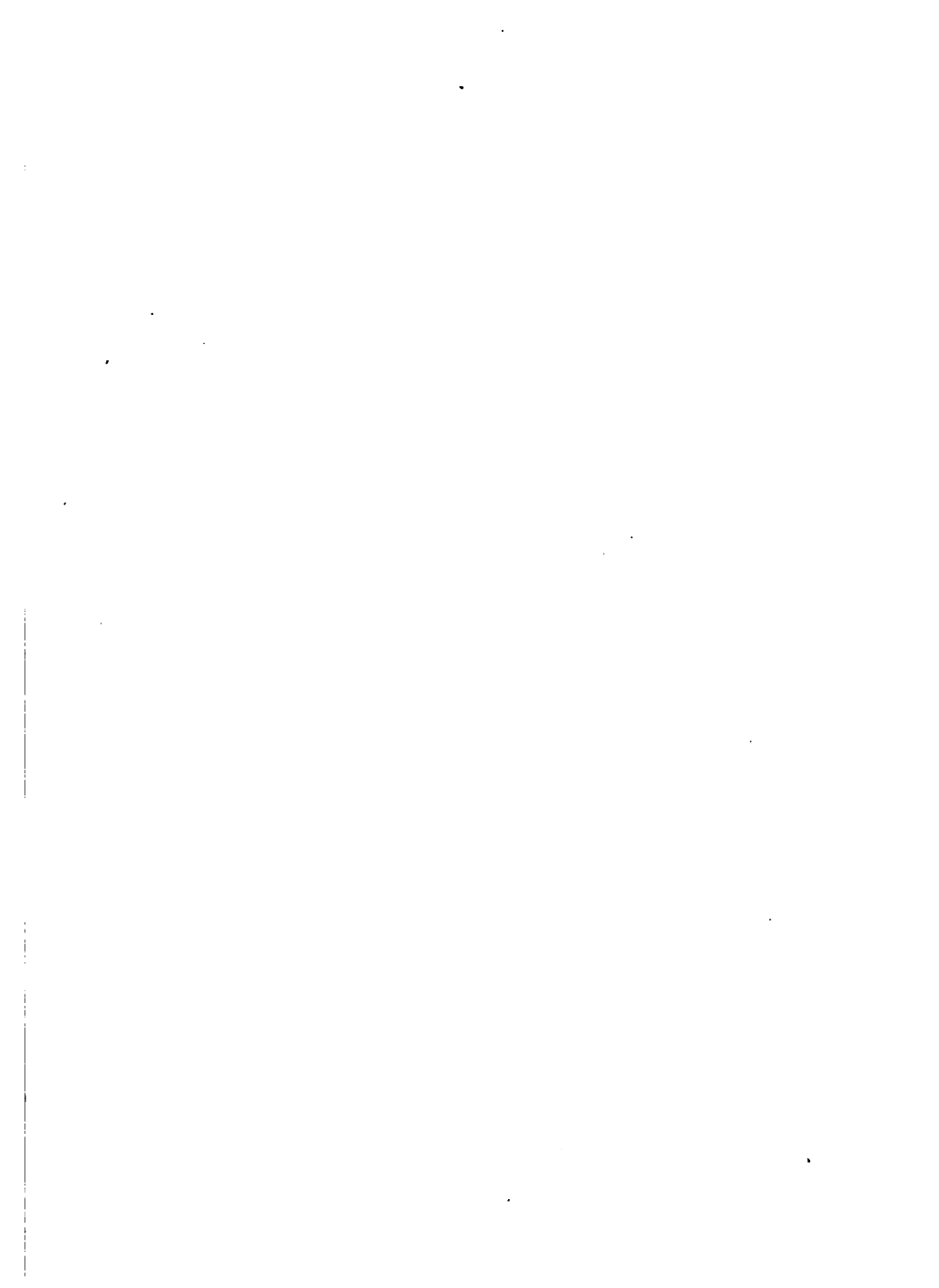


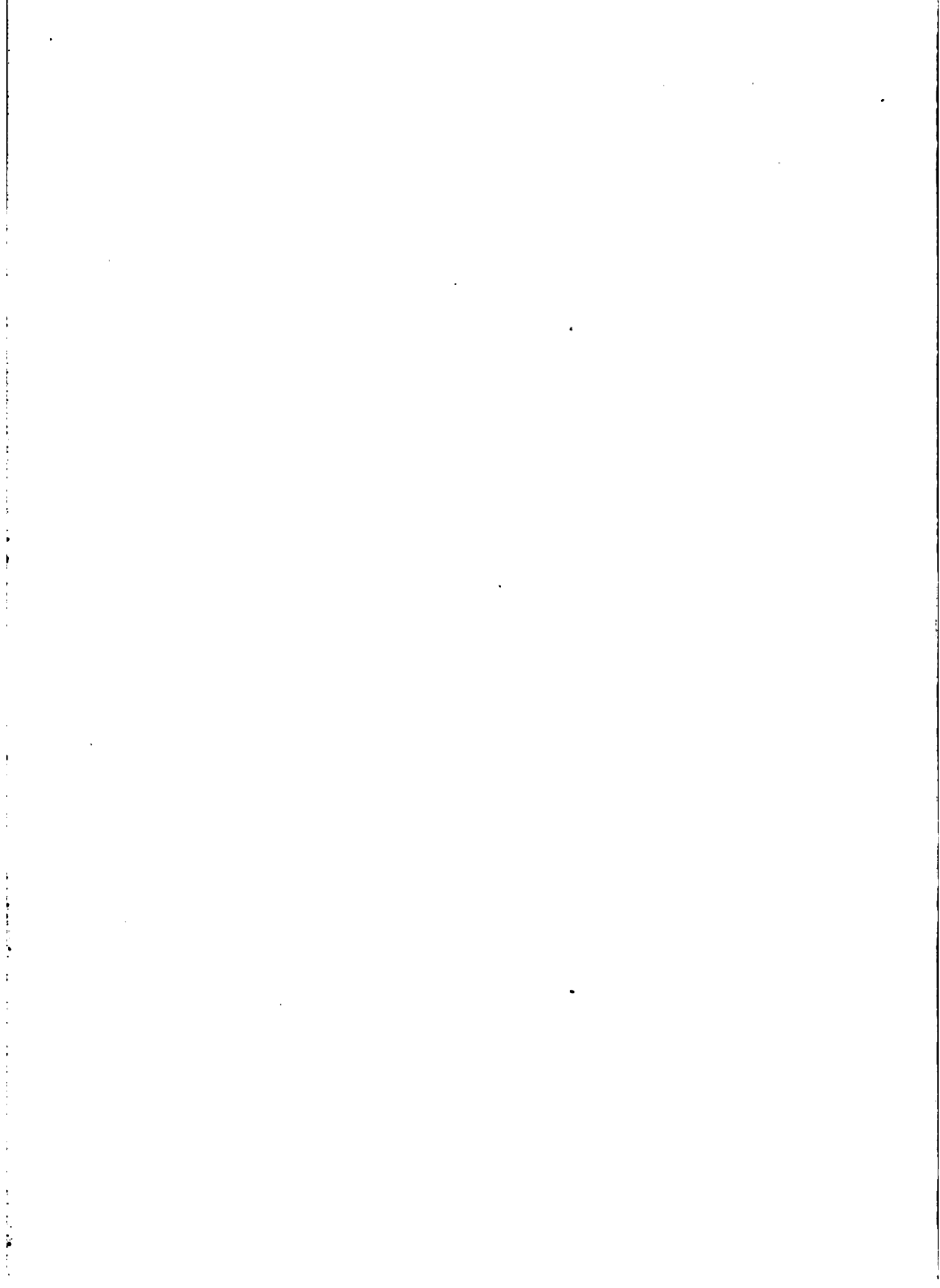
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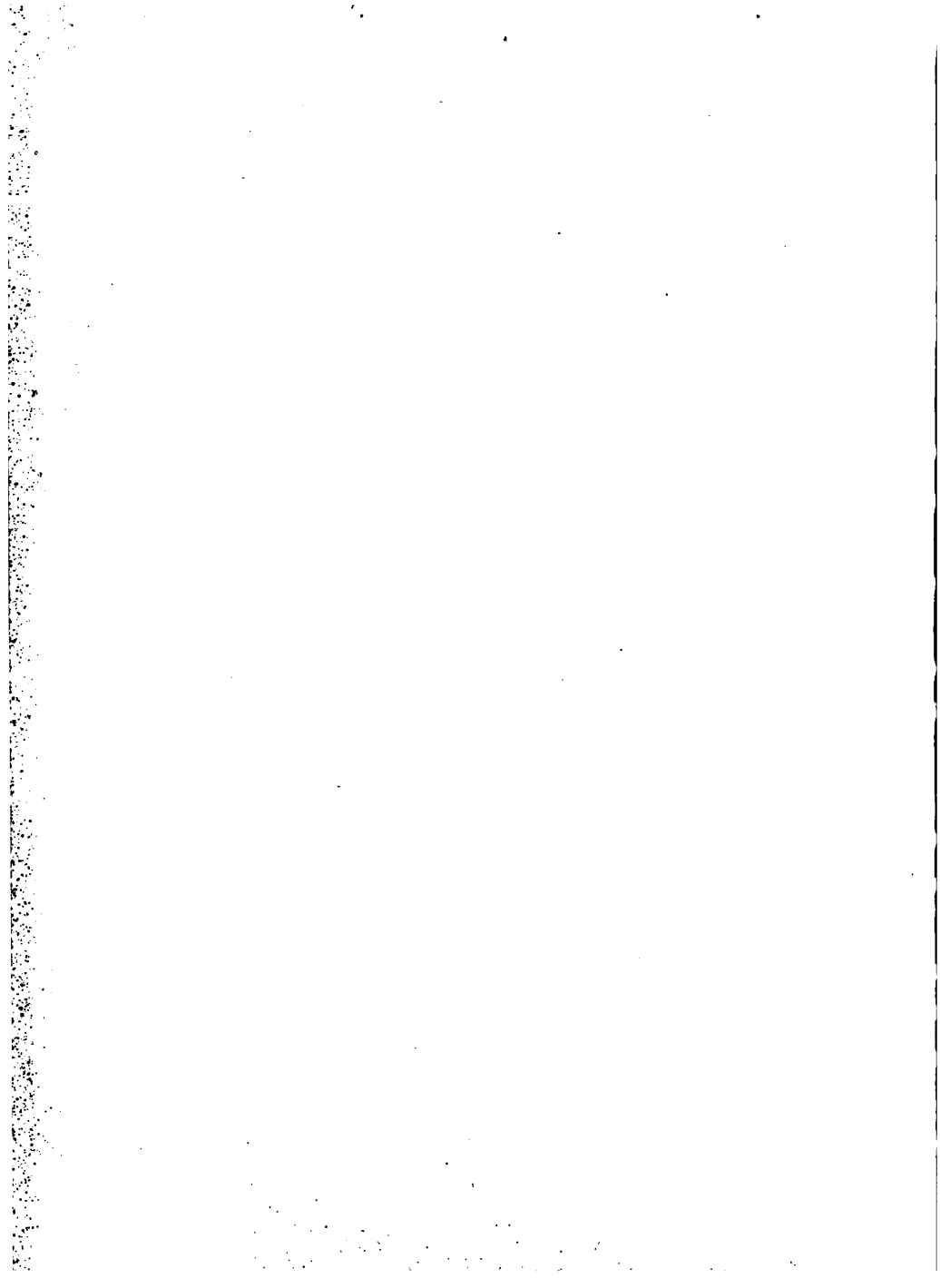




MARY LYON

HER LIFE STORY





**“Oh! may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better by their presence—”**

***Copyright, 1897.***



# Life Story of Mary Lyon

Founder of Mount Holyoke College



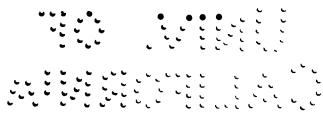
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**HENRY MORSE STEPHENS**

To the young women of the present  
day this story of Mary Lyon's life is  
affectionately inscribed.

Mrs. JOHN DOUGLAS.



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MARY LYON HALL.

## INTRODUCTION.

It has been wisely said, that the greatest statues require least drapery.

Certainly, the men and women who have been most useful, require least eulogy.

The object of this sketch is to give in fewest words the essence of a noble life. Miss Lyon's work can be better seen, from this standpoint, in the History of Time than from any former one, and now, as her child, The Mount Holyoke Seminary is rising as a Phoenix from its ashes, it seems desirable that we should review it.

President Hitchcock, of Amherst College, assisted by several ladies who had intimately known her, prepared a memoir of Miss Lyon soon after her death.

This has been widely circulated and highly prized in America, in England and in some of the islands of the sea. The American Tract Society, in 1858, published a review of this work.



Both these volumes are still in circulation, but it has been thought that a brief abstract of them would, in this busy day, be more extensively read.

To her pupils, and to the children of her personal friends, this short sketch could never take the place of the larger works, but, with the blessing of God, it may serve to widen the streams of their influence.

Dr. Hitchcock says in the closing words of his preface: "Personally, I am grateful that I have been called to examine and scrutinize a character so worthy of imitation. Rarely, if ever, has any uninspired history been so profitable to me."

Christ, of course, is the only ultimate standard by which all human excellence must be measured, but it is most helpful to contemplate those who standing on our own level, have made their lives potential.

To the Divinity that guided, rather than to the instrument employed, is the honor justly due. Mary Lyon, as she looks down from "the great cloud of witnesses," if permitted to cheer on the militant pilgrim, would say, as she always did when here, "To God be all the glory."

It is believed this review will prove an incentive, especially to the Young Ladies of the present day,

many of whom have never yet heard of Mary Lyon. It will show them that they "Can make their lives sublime" by cultivating her principles and her fidelity, even though never called to found a Seminary. It will illuminate the truth that "the entrance of God's Word giveth light" and few can read without profit the story of her pilgrimage to the Eternal shores.

If it should prove an inspiration to any, all who know her will rejoice, and the compiler will be abundantly repaid.





## LIFE STORY OF MARY LYON.

### I.

#### EARLY DAYS.

Among the mountains and sheltered dells of New England, there have been many obscure homes, where "the finest immortelles" have been gathered for the Father's House above.

On earth, they have been seed-sowers. The four winds of Heaven have scattered the seed sown, and the sowers, now in the Paradise of God, are bringing in the sheaves.

One of these homes, long to be remembered, was in the little mountain town of Buckland, Franklin County, Massachusetts. For long years, it had been consecrated by the prayer, that the children, and the children's children, to the latest generation, might be a seed to serve God.

There, Mary Lyon, of cherished memory, was born, *one hundred years ago!*

It is recorded of her Father that altho' a man of much force, he was never known to speak an angry word. "Few words but highest praise."

Her mother was a woman of vigorous mind and practical piety. From her the germ of Mary's character chiefly received the stamp which decided its future growth.

Yet, as Dr. Hitchcock has well said: "It is not known how many of her principles of action can be directly traced to parental training, for oft-times the descending stream of influence owes its character to the salt which was cast into it by some hand, at a point so high that it has ceased to be acknowledged or even known."

It has been said "She was the child of poverty." Yet her family was not oppressively poor. On that rock-bound farm, industry and economy were in constant demand, but theirs was the poverty of the pioneer, which has been truly said to be, in reality, "No poverty at all."

The wants were simple, therefore the supply was ample. No idleness or luxury was there—but they lived in mental freedom and a broad outlook. Want was made to walk so gracefully within that circle of limited means, that even when left a widow, with seven small children, the dear mother had time to enjoy the garden of flowers, and had

the wherewithal to aid a more restricted neighbor. It was a wild, romantic farm, but nothing was left to take its own way. She was busy early and late, directing all the work, and cultivating the Olive Plants around her table—but the roses, pinks, and peonies were never overlooked.

Behind their dwelling was a craggy cliff, and it was their favorite pastime to climb this rocky steep, and get a view of the far-off mountains, the deep valleys and extended plains.

Most delightful of all was the wild-winding way to the village church, nearly two miles in length, but traversed every Sabbath by that orderly group, the pony taking the mother on his hospitable back.

Mary seems to have been the star of the group. With warmth of heart she combined great elasticity of spirits, and a uniform desire to do something for the happiness of others. To this was added a keen perception of the humorous, and a power of description which rendered her in a special sense "the life of the household."

In her studies she was always on the alert. One of her teachers remarked: "I would like to see what that girl would make if she could go to college."

But this was not the day of colleges for girls. The first Woman's College was yet to be born,

and this child was to be the honored mother. She had, as might be expected, a strong religious bent—and even before she was a Christian herself, she was known to gather her companions about her, and explain to them the way of life, as her parents had taught it to her.

Subsequently, on a Sabbath day, having listened to a sermon on the character of God, her affections seemed to flow out to that Being whom she had revered, from her earliest recollection.

This was in 1816, and in later years she always referred to it as the time of her conversion, altho' in accordance with the prevailing habit of the time and place, she did not then speak of it, even to her mother. The next year, she entered Sanborn Academy, at Ashfield, in her native state. She was still a child of nature. One said of her: "She is all intellect—she does not seem to know that she has a body to care for."

The family with whom she boarded said, that she slept not more than four hours out of the twenty-four. The simple habits of her childhood life, had prepared her to endure this.

Her appearance was so unique, her progress so remarkable, and her face so radiant, that a stranger could not fail to observe her. Some of her companions in study, became distinguished for

their talents and achievements in later years; and rarely has that institution held within its walls so many destined to bless the world with their influence, but no one excelled her in recitation.

So eager was she, that the preceptor assigned her extra lessons. When he gave her the Latin grammar, he directed her to omit these, and only keep up with her regular classes. Within three days, she committed and recited all those portions usually taken at first, and her teacher (Elihu Barrett, afterwards the noted master of many languages) remarked, that he never knew it more accurately rendered.

She soon began to receive limited classes, all the while pursuing her own studies, not neglecting instructions for a term in drawing and painting, in which a well-known artist was her teacher. Regarding her penmanship as deficient, she placed herself under a specialist in writing. He likes to relate how, when he gave her a new book for practice, and placed a Latin motto at the entrance, she gave it back to him, and asked him to write it in English, as she feared she might be thought wiser than she was. This is mentioned only to present a prominent feature in her character—never to appear wiser, than she was in reality.



A notable event in her life occurred in 1821, when she entered the school of Rev. Joseph Emerson, of saintly memory. It was an opportunity she had long desired, and her beaming eye and sunny face spoke the gratitude of her heart. She fully realized her expectations, and always said that she owed more to Mr. Emerson than to any other teacher.

He remarked, years afterward, that he had instructed many ladies whose minds had been better disciplined, but in power, he considered her superior to them all.

She was supremely absorbed with her books, but a time of religious interest came. The Spirit of God seemed in a special manner to brood over that favored spot, and the thought occurred to Mary that the Christian girls in the Seminary might be so engrossed with their studies as not to realize the danger of those out of Christ, and thereby prove a stumbling-block to them.

In writing to her mother, in whose prayers she had great confidence, she begs that she would pray for all the girls, that the most important things might not be displaced. Moments often come in the lives of individuals, as well as of nations, which give character to their entire future.

There were at least two special seasons in Miss

Lyon's life, in which, in view of her finished work, we cannot fail to see the guiding hand of God.

They were times of great perplexity to her.

She had taught her classes successfully in the view of others, but her standard was so high that she was much depressed, quite contrary to her nature, with the possibility of comparative failure, and other openings presented themselves.

For a long time she vacillated and found relief only in tears. But God opened her eyes and showed her *His* way.

Go where she would she could never have been an ordinary woman. She must have been helpful to others, but she was still like the unchiseled marble. Its worth and beauty must be brought forth by the hand of the artist. The Infinite Artist evidently designed to do this for the profit of many, and the glory of His name.

In August, 1821, she wrote to her sister: "I have never realized the solemnity of living so much as I do now. It is, indeed, 'greater to live than to die.'

"What consequence may often depend upon a single word, or the deed which to us seems of trifling significance!

"With what care should we regulate our conduct and even our thoughts! This cannot be done without effort. It demands the best use of

our powers. Yea, more, we need constant assistance from above, the guidance of a Heavenly hand."

Previously, she said: "I have cultivated the intellect rather than the heart. From Mr. Emerson I have learned to give each its due proportion."

On being asked if it was really true that she committed the Latin grammar in three days, she replied: "Oh, that was in one of those schools where they do little else but study and recite, not near as good for the cultivation of character as Mr. Emerson's. I just traced the likenesses and differences of the various declensions and conjugations; and, as for the rules of syntax, they are so much like those in the English grammar that it did not take long to master them. So, you see, it was no great feat, after all."

Then she went on to speak of Mr. Emerson's school as the one where she treasured up great principles of action and received a new view of education. Here she met with many cultivated people who were giving the first place to efforts for enlisting others in the work of blessing the world.

Her remarkable powers of mind, her docility, her good will to all about her, and her uncloud-

ed temper made her from the first an object of special interest to her teachers and companions.

No pupil of her own, was ever more industrious, more yielding, or more respectful. While her instructors took delight in her, with gratitude, spoken or unspoken, she treasured every suggestion and tried to put it in immediate practice.

## II.

### SCHOOLS IN LONDONDERRY, BUCKLAND AND IPSWICH.

In the spring of 1823 Miss Lyon was invited by Miss Z. P. Grant to assist her in a school for ladies, already established in Londonderry, now known as Derry, in New Hampshire. She accepted the invitation, and by way of preparation for her duties, attended a series of lectures on Chemistry, by Prof. Eaton, of Amherst College, chiefly in order that she might be able to illustrate that science by experiments.

The views of these ladies, Miss Grant and Miss Lyon, were very congenial, and the plans they adopted in Derry, were the commencement of those so successfully carried out at a later day, in the celebrated school at Ipswich, and afterward still more perfectly at South Hadley.

An extract from a letter to her sister, who was teaching, will show how careful she was in the study of methods: "You will do well to spare no pains to obtain the confidence of every pupil, and to make them see the reason of your re-

quirements. Do not say too much to them at one time. I think it best to devote the necessary time to their behavior, even if they do not study so much. If any are disposed to trouble you, I think it will be helpful to speak with them out of school and entirely alone. The good influence of every well-behaved pupil is very great. Bring this, to their attention.

“Lead them, if possible, to be strictly truthful, and then let them see that you rely implicitly on their word.”

Both placed great confidence in the study of God's Word for the development of the mind, no less than the guidance of the heart and control of the life. A short portion every morning, and once a week a study of two hours, was “the law of the house.”

As the school at Derry did not cover the winter months, Miss Lyon spent these in her mountain home. Even here she made the most of her time. The female teachers in the summer schools of that vicinity improved their opportunity and a class of twenty-five was formed.

Efforts were made to retain her there permanently. Although these were not successful, the seed she planted bore fruit an hundred-fold and can still be gathered up.

Of this class, she says: "Fourteen of my pupils board with me. We have a table by ourselves. I was well aware that it would require more than average dignity, in which quality I am sadly deficient, to prevent unprofitable conversation at table, and thought it best to introduce some entertaining and profitable topic. To get this fairly established required more effort than I anticipated. But I find it now really delightful. I often wonder how Miss Grant could have taken care of so many last summer." She adds: "My spirits have been uniform for four weeks. I do not remember one hour of depression. I consider this a great blessing, because depression paralyzes."

The number of pupils soon increased to fifty. The special influences of the Spirit were given, and many began to live a new life.

After her return to Derry she wrote to her mother: "Don't forget that I am much interested in little things. It does my heart good to read a page filled with words of home and friends, and I am deeply interested, too, in all I can learn of my pupils, or rather those who were mine last winter. The last days of last term were the most fruitful and precious of my life. I can scarcely realize them now. It is not the least of all my blessings that I am permitted to do something

for the happiness and welfare of others. I am, indeed, thankful for an active life, but I hope I shall not be so attached to activity, that if my health were lost, all my pleasures would be gone. I would so receive present favors from the hand of God that should the streams be hereafter cut off, the fountain would remain to be a never failing source of enjoyment. I can safely and cheerfully leave all the future in His hands."

Of the school in Derry she now writes: "We have about ninety pupils, very attentive and studious, but with a great variety of character." To a sister, on the Fourth of July: "Half a century has passed since the Declaration of Independence. Who could have anticipated such growth? Must we not exclaim, 'This is the finger of God!' Perhaps the same Almighty One, who could with a glance see the course of the Israelitish nation from the selling of Joseph to the coming of the Messiah, has designs of mercy for all the nations of the earth, through the unparalleled blessings which He has bestowed upon this. Aye, it may be that His dealings with our beloved land are very closely connected with the causes which shall usher in that glorious day toward which the hearts of those who love Christ are eagerly looking. I remember you as Paul did the Romans. (Romans i: 9.)"



In the spring of 1828 Miss Grant removed from Derry to Ipswich, Mass. A large number of her pupils followed her. Miss Lyon continued to assist her in the summer, but still maintained her winter school at Buckland. The influences of the spirit were largely bestowed at both places.

She writes: "Scarcely a day passes that some one is not earnestly seeking conscious communion with Christ. That it is God's work, no candid observer can doubt. 'Truly, it is the Lord's doing and marvelous in our eyes.' May nothing be permitted to occur which shall hinder or mar it in any degree."

In 1829 the school in Buckland was reluctantly relinquished because she thought she could not do justice to both places.

In regard to this, she says: "It has been a great trial to me, for I have never witnessed elsewhere such improvement in character and in real desire to cultivate meekness, humility, patience and perseverance. A spirit of benevolence has prevailed to such a degree that selfishness has taken its proper place in our little community. We have earnestly labored to get enlarged views in regard to our country, its present state, its prospects, and its needs; also, to understand what can be done, and what ought to be done, and to know our own

individual duty. Some of the most intelligent of these young ladies, all of whom have been tenderly, and some of them luxuriously brought up, think now that they must labor, where most needed and express a willingness to go anywhere, if only the Master of the vineyard will send them, and say at last, 'She hath done what she could.'

The success of Mary Lyon in this school shows what one competent woman can do with inadequate accommodations in a community alive to the blessings of education. Commencing with twenty-five she closed with one hundred. Many of these had been teachers, but being herself a model she taught them better methods. Though the term had not then been coined, this was essentially a "normal school." Its Christian character warmly enlisted the sympathies of Christian people. Daughters who went there chiefly bent upon their own interests, went home determined to labor for the interests of others. All knew that those who were educated there thought more of mind than raiment; preferred a good education to the most palatable dainties, and intended to make the most of themselves for the high purposes of usefulness and duty. This was a very simple and inexpensive school, but the subsequent history of some of those ladies, if written, would be almost

as interesting as that of Mary Lyon herself. Verily the seed she planted was "that whose fruit is in itself"—thus yielding an abundant harvest.

A single example may be given: S. B. was under Miss Lyon's instruction at Buckland for six winters. There she first sought for herself "The kingdom of God and His righteousness," and was deeply impressed with her personal duty and privilege to promote the safety and happiness of others.

Who, save the pupils of Miss Lyon, could ever know the impressive manner in which she could say: "Oh, young ladies, do not always seek for the most delightful places, and the most congenial work. Go, rather, where others will not be likely to go, and as they bear your body to its last resting place, may all who knew you be able to say, 'She hath done what she could.'"

Thus educated, Miss B. closed behind her the pleasant chambers so cozily furnished, bade adieu to all the privileges of her New England home, and took up her abode in a Western territory. Miss Lyon's blessing went with her, and the blessing of many has since rested upon her. Making her home with a married sister who, as to the good things of this life, was very differently situated from their parents. She opened a school in a small room of

this small house. Fifteen came timidly in—French, Dutch and American. She taught them what they most needed to know—spending her time and energy upon them as though they were princes. Almost as much out of sight as moles and miners, she labored earnestly to do them good. Soon others came in. The place became too straight. A house was built for their accommodation, and the number of pupils exceeded one hundred. The youngest was very young and the oldest, in winter, were often masters and sailors of the vessels that plied upon the lakes in the summer. Of these she said: "They are among my most docile, studious and agreeable pupils."

Every intelligent person in that part of the state (for it is no longer a territory) acknowledged her beneficent influence, and more or less directly, felt the force of her character.

Mary Lyon herself could not have been more unselfish, more patient or more Christly. What a joy to her, as she looks down "from the battlements of heaven" upon the scene of her earthly labors—to behold not one, but many such results.

These streams of influence must inevitably widen, so long as earth and time endure. The permanent impression for good—the intellect unrolled in her presence upon which she so distinctly inscribed:

“Holiness unto the Lord,” and the hearts of immortal beings rightly directed—this and nothing less, is the imperishable work even of Miss Lyon’s early life. Its fruits must meet her, not only when she glances from heaven to earth, but at every turn of her walks in Paradise.

It may be stated here, that becoming deeply impressed with the importance of a more permanent school of high character, she now gave the final negative to the question of matrimony. Weighing carefully the probabilities of comparative usefulness in wedded life she decided to remain a teacher.

The immediate occasion of this decision was a very tempting offer, which she thought afforded as good a prospect of love and happiness as she could expect. When she had once resolved to give her undivided attention to the advancement of female education her decision was fixed beyond recall. “If the bishop of all the churches had thrown an apple of gold in her path she would not have stopped to pick it up. A warm heart beat in that broad chest, and once appropriated, it would never have been recalled. She seemed to be entirely without ambition to be known and would have moved along in an even lovely course like her noble mother before her. Her life would

probably have been longer on earth, but Mount Holyoke Seminary would not have been established." We must see a Providence in the fact that this woman did not become encumbered with domestic cares.

At Ipswich the number of pupils continued to increase until in 1831 one hundred and ninety were enrolled. Not having suitable accommodations for so many, certain qualifications were required for admission, and the number of pupils was finally limited to one hundred.

The failing health of Miss Grant now rendered a change of climate imperative, and the school was left entirely to the direction of Miss Lyon, but with all her cares she still studied the problem of a more permanent institution, and her mind was full of the earnest purpose to do all in her power to promote it. Some gentlemen and ladies in Ipswich, whose interest she had enlisted, met in her parlor and selected a committee to investigate. Sadly missing the counsels of Miss Grant, it was her pastime to write her a long weekly letter.

At one time she wrote: "My labors the past week have been unusually fatiguing. A few difficult cases required much personal effort. I have for some time been seeking for the opportunity to secure a greater degree of conscientiousness in

the rendering of accounts. Oh! that God would guide in the selection of all our methods.

“In regard to my cherished ‘Castle in the Air,’ sometimes a cloud of discouragement passes over me, but it is soon gone. I still believe it will, in the near future, become a reality. If I could be permitted to build the portico, and clear the ground for a temple that shall stand from age to age, the hand-maid of education and the permanent representative of the Protestant faith, it would certainly be the height of my ambition. The darker the outlook sometimes the brighter the faith, because we rest more quietly on the arm that never fails. I have often found myself attempting to preserve the manna until morning, but have never succeeded. How wise is the economy of grace! and how we should rejoice that we cannot lay up stores for ourselves, either of wisdom or faith.”

Again, in observing how ignorant the first disciples were, after being with Jesus three years: “I am reminded of our inability to determine the way by which He will be glorified now. How easy it would have been for Him to have made them understand that He would rise from the dead. But He saw it was not best for them, at that time, to understand that. How little we know what is best! I can pray without reserve

that God's will may be done on earth 'as perfectly as it is done in heaven;' and that the events and even the circumstances that He sees to be best, may take place, but when I ask for particular blessings I must feel that I do not know how to ask, and that it is a great privilege to refer the whole matter to Him. I hope that many in this school may be fitted to labor in the Master's vineyard.

"I am remarkably well—do emphatically 'enjoy health.' There is an unusual evenness in my experience—freedom from excitement or from any rising above the common level. My cup is full and running over, and every future scene seems all I could desire. I often say to myself: "How delightful it is to work; how sweet is life.' I do not now refer to religious enjoyment. Spiritually, I sometimes walk in darkness and see no light—but I am not left long to wander thus. Christ ever stands near, to forgive even the greatest sin—unbelief. Yea, even 'seventy times seven,' so the record reads. Do pray that our teachers may all be wholly devoted to God, and faithful in His service. Pray that none of us may become entangled with the things of this brief life, or fail to connect temporal duties and passing pleasures with the eternal future.



“How are you now? May you ever rest under the shadow of His wing.”

A letter to one of her nieces, who had asked her for counsel, will show what motives she placed before them:

“I should be very much influenced in giving my advice by your own views in regard to the main object of life. Formerly I was very desirous that my friends should be thoroughly educated, in order that they might take good positions in society, but now I consider that very unworthy, as the main motive, in view of the uncertainty of life, and the great issues that are depending upon it. There is a great work to be done for Christ, before he comes, and many men and women are needed to accomplish it. Much prejudice and indifference is to be counteracted and a great variety of wrongs are to be removed. The next generation will walk in the footsteps of this. Teachers of a high order are eminently needed. Is it your deliberate choice to go wherever He may send you, and to labor for Him? If this is your decision, and you think that you possess a natural aptness for teaching, by all means qualify yourself. In order to exercise much moral power over others, you must have a well-cultivated mind.

“If, as I said, your object is to labor for the happiness and well being of the race, I advise you, by all means, to bear the expense of the journey, and come to this seminary. You will have no charges here except the charge given in Hebrews xiii: 16. May you be guided in the path of duty, which is the path of peace.”

It may be stated here that after being educated by her, two of Miss Lyon's nieces devoted themselves to foreign fields, and the others to missionary work in the home-land.

Writing to Miss Grant, she refers to a very select seminary about to be opened: “I fear it will be adapted exclusively to the highest classes, so called. The improvement of the masses seems of less importance to them. But I am glad, on the whole, of their advent. They will teach the Scriptures, and I hope will allow them to take the lead. Then I care not how soon philosophy follows.

“I have just begun to take up in the Hall, the general epistles of Peter. Oh, that I may receive into my own soul the glorious truths that emanate from many a radiant point. To the same, “Christ-field! How white it is to the harvest! The precious grain is continually wasting! May you and I be so directed that we shall bring in the largest possible sheaves!”

Yesterday was my birthday; thirty-six years of my life are gone. The remaining years are probably few. But in one thing I can always rejoice, If 'the Lord hath need of me,' He can give me the great privilege of long life in His service; if not, I would be ready to go to Him with rejoicing. Whether my days are few or many, I would much prefer, if God is willing, to labor—not for the highest classes (in worldly phrase so called)—but for the great middle class. This contains the main wheels which are to move the world. The founding of a permanent Ladies' Seminary is a great enterprise. Whatever share I have in it must be a humble and laborious one. How I can get a footing firm enough for my feet to rest upon while I am freely working, I do not yet know, but, perhaps, God will open the way. He may only permit me to awaken an interest in the cause, appointing that the temple should be built by other hands."

### III.

#### NEW PLANS.

While Miss Lyon thus wrote, she scarcely knew her own heart. Mentally, she was planning for more definite work. Only a few days later she wrote to Miss Grant:

“If only a few judicious gentlemen could be persuaded to join us, might we not begin on a small scale?”

Meantime it is said that the committee of gentlemen that had been enlisted, discouraged by the apathy they met had actually disbanded.

With Miss Grant's concurrence she prepared and circulated the following letter:

*To the Friends and Patrons of Ipswich Female Seminary:*

“It has long been a subject of regret to those familiar with the character of this institution that many very promising young ladies are denied the benefit of its privileges on account of limited means.

"The question has been asked: Is there no way by which the expenses could be so reduced as to include these. If not here, could not another institution elsewhere be founded on the following plan:

"First. Buildings to be erected and furnished by voluntary gifts and placed free from encumbrance in the hands of trustees.

"Second. Best qualified teachers to be secured who, possessing a 'philanthropic spirit,' would cheerfully labor, with less compensation than they would elsewhere receive.

"Third. Style of living, plain, but good, simple and hygienic.

"Fourth. Domestic work, very systematically arranged, mostly performed by the young ladies under the direction of a superintending matron.

"Fifth. No surplus income to revert to the teachers, but all to be cast into the treasury for the purpose of still further reduction in pupils' expenses the following year. This, of course, would not meet the case of such as were entirely destitute—but it would reach a large and interesting class of enterprising young women, and greatly elevate the standard of female education.

Every department of society would be benefited by this uplift. The enterprise should be present-

ed with broad and liberal views—for neither local or exclusively denominational benefit—equally claiming the patronage of every part of New England.

“To effect this, no special privileges should be granted to the students of the place where this Seminary might be located. All such should be received as boarders, subject to the same regulations as those from abroad.

“The spot selected should be the one considered most favorable to permanent growth, suited to nourish the tender plant, and to support the lofty oak.”

To Thos. White, Esq., of Ashland, Mass., who had been her special friend and adviser, she forwarded a number of these circulars, for distribution among the gentlemen and ladies of his acquaintance, accompanying them with the following letter:

“IPSWICH, March 5th, 1834.

“*Dear Sir:*

“I have long cherished a great desire that the advantages of this Seminary should be brought within the range of those without ample means, and that in some way the expenses should be reduced to a level with their ability. I do wish that our wealthy farmers would take this sub-

ject into consideration. If they would take hold of it vigorously, perhaps something could be done which would essentially promote the interests of their posterity.

“While it is desirable that every benevolent man and woman should be able to grasp all the benevolent enterprises of the day, and do something for each, I am persuaded that the interests of the whole are best promoted by the attention of each being especially directed to some single enterprise. I am wishing that some of our fathers would select this as the special child of their prayers and their gifts.

“Would you not, dear sir, be glad in your old age to enlist some kindred souls in this great work which, in importance to the future welfare of our country and of the world, might not fall behind any of our leading benevolences? Would it not rejoice your heart if you could see this movement spread as our home and foreign missionary operations have done? I do believe it might be so, and that he who first putting his ‘hand to the plough’ shall say to others, ‘Come, thou, and do thou likewise,’ will deserve the gratitude of his country. I will gladly do all I can, and I know of other ladies who are ready to embark in the enterprise.

“In six months I intend to close my labors here, that I may devote myself wholly to this work.”

She also wrote to Professor Hitchcock, of Amherst College:

*“Reverend and Dear Sir:*

“Knowing that you are interested in my proposed plan, for a permanent Seminary for Ladies, I offer no apology for this communication.

“The friends of the cause are more and more convinced that this is essential to the prosperity of higher education. What school of this kind is now in existence—one which seems likely to outlive its present teachers? Would not a few such (perhaps one or two in every state), where young women of enterprise could reasonably gather, to receive instruction and mature their plans, exert a potent influence for good?

“Personally, I will do what I can; but nothing can be successfully accomplished without the aid of a few benevolent gentlemen, whose time and talents are much in demand, and whose hands are already full of important interests.

“None others could arouse any enthusiasm on this hitherto neglected subject.

“I must now beg that you will consider this



(not in the light of personal friendship, feeling under a kind of obligation to treat it with respect), but as a philanthropic scheme, and if it commends itself to you, lend us a helping hand.

“Some of us have been quietly discussing this subject for several months. It seems to be the prevailing idea that Ipswich is the right location, but some would prefer to inquire about other places. I regard this as a matter of vital importance, and believing that we should find congenial soil, I am very desirous that localities in the Connecticut Valley should receive special attention. I would like to test the sentiment in your vicinity.

“If the prospect of our plan is auspicious we will obtain from the Legislature an act of incorporation.

“Yours respectfully,

“MARY LYON.”

About this time she wrote to Miss Grant:

“Is it not true that oft-times it is the Christian’s duty to labor without financial reward; and have not multitudes always been raised up, who have gladly turned a deaf ear to all money considerations, so long as the necessity continued? I think Paul acted on this principle.

“Is it not of first importance that not only

teachers but mothers should be wisely trained to be the educators of the race? To effect this we must have the best advantages at moderate expense.

“It will be necessary that those who first enter this field should receive very little pecuniary compensation, thus commending the cause to those whose hearts are not much enlarged by Christian philanthropy. How many years must elapse before this would no longer be needful, time and experience alone can decide.

To Miss Hannah White:

“I suppose you have heard that I am endeavoring to establish a manual labor school for young ladies. I have heard this. But it is not true, and I wish the mistake could be corrected. I will tell you what I would like to do. You know it has become very popular for our highest and best seminaries for young men to be moderate in their expenses. It is not considered a great recommendation for a college to be very expensive. But how different it is in regard to *ladies'* schools. Even in this Nineteenth century many value these according to the money invested. Is it not rather gratifying to young ladies to attend expensive schools while, perhaps, their brothers would rather glory in pursuing their studies at a moderate outlay?

“There is a general opinion that female education must be costly, and that those who cannot pay the price must do without it. I wish the same public interest could be roused in extending superior educational advantages to women as already exists for young men. Their colleges are established by philanthropic people and liberally endowed. Why should it not be so in regard to colleges for women? I believe it *will* be, at some future time. But it cannot be accomplished, unless means are used to secure the interest of the common people.

“It has seemed to me desirable that the pioneer in this line should present some marked features which should attract attention, and I have thought that with the aid of modern invention and perfect system the ordinary domestic work could be performed by the young ladies, not as an essential feature of the institution, but as a mere appendage. This ought by no means to give the name of manual labor to the scheme. After the acquaintance I have had with many cultivated families, where the daughters in a systematic manner efficiently perform domestic duties, I have the greatest confidence that a system might be established by which the work of a hundred young ladies, with a competent superintending matron,

could be performed in the same perfect manner without any sacrifice of study or refinement.

“Would not this feature do away with much of the prejudice against the higher education of woman and thus prove a great advantage to the cause?”

To her sister she writes:

“I am about to embark in a frail boat upon a boisterous sea. I know not whither I shall be driven, how I shall be tossed, or in what port I shall arrive. Nor do I know when I shall take up the regular work of my chosen profession again.

“But I am not anxious. I never saw any work before me which seemed so directly the work of the Lord as this. It is very delightful, in the midst of darkness and doubt, to commit the whole to His guidance.

“I wish to spend the next winter partly in study and partly in planning for the future. I desire to be in a cultivated family where I shall have access to a good library, in a locality where I shall not be too retired, for I shall have frequent need of counsel. Providence has kindly given me such a home in the family of Professor Hitchcock.”

## IV.

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR HER WORK.

Let us survey, at this point, the superior qualifications of Miss Lyon for the work to which she is now sacredly devoted.

She is thirty-seven years of age, health, remarkably good; power of endurance, very great; faith, courage and enthusiasm, unbounded;—her strong common-sense undiluted by sentimental weakness, her knowledge of a teacher's duties liberal and definite. She had been so successful as a teacher that her name was sufficient to draw around her women of fine minds, high moral tone and good home training. Discerning people who knew her well were convinced that her consecration to the object before her, her energy and perseverance, would ensure the success of her plan, and she had a distinct conception of the seminary she wished to found. The pattern had been shown her "in the mount" by Him who orders all things after the counsel of his own will, and guides the very thoughts of those who put all their

confidence in Him. To the embodying of her vision she had conscientiously devoted the residue of her life. She accepted it as the work appointed her by "the Heavenly Father," without one misgiving as to the final result. With a property of less than two thousand dollars, and with powers and attainments which would have secured an ample salary, she turned from every service that would have insured pecuniary reward, and, at her own charges, undertook a long and painful warfare to found an institution from which she inflexibly resolved to receive only a home and two hundred dollars a year.

Not a man of much wealth had at this time given her his countenance or aid. Few were interested in her project, and the public were in quiet ignorance of her plans. Yet, she was not wholly alone. A few intelligent gentlemen and ladies, who had known her, thoroughly relying on her competence, energy and benevolence, gave her an encouraging word, and in her pupils she always had the most enthusiastic friends.

She had learned the infinite superiority of the possessions which the soul can take across the River of Death, and her indifference to the things that perish in the using were a part of her outfit for her mission. She never made war on the

distinctions of society, but thought the church and school should not be cumbered with them, and was continually indifferent to what is often called gentility. "My heart is sick," she said, "of *empty* gentility."

In her early and most susceptible years her godly mother had turned her attention to that adorning "which is incorruptible and fadeth not away"—and to "the ornament which in the sight of God is of great price." She had, as a natural consequence, possessed, from her childhood, the ornament of a guileless, humble and intensely benevolent spirit. It seemed to her of *less* consequence that her earthly robes conformed to her station. These points in her character, whether they were the result of constitutional bias, of education or of grace, fitted her for the burdens she was assuming. They helped her to make herself of "no reputation," and to do anything that was right to procure the timber and the stone, the gold and the silver, necessary to the temple which she desired to build for the Lord. But the best of all her qualifications was the power and skill she had in presenting Gospel Truth.

Those who had known her in Ipswich where, during the repeated absence of Miss Grant, she had stood at the head of the school, often spoke

of the half hour in the morning devoted to Scriptural truth. She taught no abstract system of theology and never spoke of sects, but dwelt upon fundamental truths, presenting them, one by one, in different lights and illustrating in various ways. How many have heard her thus dwell upon the Truth, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The vivid sense she had of what she believed—was the secret of her power. When she spoke of common things the sincerity and energy of her manner always commanded attention, but there was something more than this when she dealt out heavenly wisdom. Her subdued tones, as she spoke of eternal realities, without a gesture save of her moving lips, conveyed as much sense of reality as if she had been to Westminster Abbey and was describing its monuments and treasures.

It was noticeable that she never begged and besought her pupils to serve God, seeming to think this degraded religion by representing it as begging for votaries. Sometimes she would seem to lift the curtain and give her listeners a glimpse into "The Holy of Holies," and then she would say, "But there will be no vacant seat there. If any one chooses to break away from the vows her parents have made for her—if she chooses to



separate herself from Christian people, her absence will not sadden that happy throng. Heaven will be full and happy without her." But she set life and death before them. In the name of Christ she offered them salvation as a free and loving gift. How she would describe the possibilities of the soul—its ever growing susceptibility to joy or woe—its identity and immortality, as if she had been through the spirit world! It was not the words, nor the manner, nor even the thought, but it was the whole effect which was so remarkable. It was the conception which her hearers formed of the truth which she exhibited.

Such conceptions cannot be described—but they will outlive death and the grave. They were none the less real, because they cannot be detailed. They were like seeds which germinate and grow. Is it strange that these and similar instructions from kindred minds were richly attended by the special influences of the spirit? All who loved to see the young choosing the path that leads to eternal happiness, were glad to hear of a plan for perpetuating these influences. Thus, while many good people hesitated, and some opposed, there were more who welcomed her mission with faith and hope.

## V.

### MOUNT HOLYOKE FEMALE SEMINARY.

About a dozen gentlemen of known benevolence and wisdom, met in Miss Lyon's private parlor September 6th, 1834, and appointed a committee to make a commencement, appoint trustees, etc. This committee stood before the public as the responsible agents for establishing the proposed Seminary until a charter should be obtained, and trustees appointed.

Miss Lyon raised \$1,000 by personal solicitation, among the ladies of her acquaintance in Ipswich, for the contingent expenses of her enterprise, and every dollar of that she invested so that it brought her in a hundred per cent. This was, as she always said, "the cornerstone of her edifice." It was her constant petition that God would open the hearts of His children in her behalf, and she believed she had some notable answers to her prayer. One such instance may be given:

A gentleman in Boston, whom the Lord had

blessed with competence, decided that all the increase of his property, over and above what was needed for the support of his family, should not only be the Lord's, but should be spent, year by year, in his service. He became much interested in Miss Lyon's plans, and his spacious mansion was opened to her. The time, influence and sympathy which he and his lovely wife gave to her work, were even more valuable than the thousands of gold and silver which they gave.

The question of location, after much discussion, was settled in 1835 in favor of South Hadley, amid the most beautiful scenery in the state, and it was named "Mount Holyoke Female Seminary."

Now she says: "I have been thinking, whether the buildings might not be commenced this season, laying out ten or twelve thousand dollars, on a plan which can be extended as soon as more funds are obtained."

To her mother: "I meet, of course, with many things to discourage me, but I have no doubt I am following the leadings of Providence. It seems to me more and more that the proposed institution, and other similar ones, are a necessary part of the great system of means, now in operation, to hasten the coming of Christ's kingdom. Per-

haps the efforts I am now making will do more for the cause of Christ, after I am laid in the grave than all I have done in my life before. It is my heart's desire that 'Holiness to the Lord' may be inscribed upon all connected with it, and that a succession of teachers may be raised up who shall spend their time and talents in sustaining this Seminary, until the Master comes."

The act of incorporation passed both Houses of the State Legislature February 10th, 1836, and was signed by the Governor the next day.

This empowered the trustees to hold real and personal estate, not exceeding in value one hundred thousand dollars, to be devoted to the establishment of a permanent Seminary of high order for the benefit of young ladies. The next October witnessed the public laying of the cornerstone.

Miss Lyon wrote: "I believe this will prove a new era in education. A building accommodating about eighty pupils will at once be erected, and additions will be made as the liberality of the Christian public shall justify. I am sure the work will not stop with this institution. Now we must make our arrangements for furnishing, and for the means to do this, we must depend chiefly upon ladies. I have no doubt the call will be promptly met."

In this she was not disappointed. Groups of ladies, in many different places, became responsible for the furnishing of one or more rooms. She pleaded for promptness in this work, for she said, "Our country is in immediate need of well furnished and self-denying teachers. The calls that come to New England are multiplying every year, and the Seminary at Ipswich (after which this is to be modeled), is compelled to return a negative reply to many such applications. The necessities of our country are but just beginning to be realized."

The time for the opening of the school arrived, and more than eighty young ladies were on the spot. Some unexpected delays had occurred, and the rooms were by no means ready.

But these were not inexperienced girls. Some of them were at least twenty years of age, and had a knowledge of affairs which books can never give, and which, in the exigencies of life, is to book knowledge what gold and silver are to the paper currency which represents them. Miss Lyon received every new comer with the welcome of a mother to a daughter. The light of her eye, and the benevolent tones of her voice, went directly to the heart of the stranger. Each one was immediately enlisted in making things ready as soon

as possible. Never were gathered in one place more willing hearts or more nimble feet. By example, precept and practice they learned the best of lessons, to "endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross." Many of them came with supplies of bedding, etc., from their respective towns, so that when evening drew near, all were comfortably domiciled. Her Father's hand, seen in each extremity, sweetened every gift and gave zest to every joy. She had long been of those who "observing providences have providences to observe." How often, with seraphic smile, did she say: "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even he shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord."

Let the embarrassment be what it might, Miss Lyon was never known to "worry," but in patience she uniformly possessed her soul. Like Joshua, she "was strong and of good courage."

That feature of her scheme which consisted in having the domestic work performed by the young ladies, was a difficult one to arrange; but she firmly believed that it might be so planned that one hour a day would be sufficient to accomplish it. This, she said, would promote health and instead of proving a hindrance to study would be a valuable means of mental as well as physical culture. As she studied the subject she

became so thoroughly convinced of its utility in this respect, that the argument of the mere saving of expense sank, in her view, into comparative insignificance.

In a circular, published just before the opening of the school, she says: "We think this will promote the health, the usefulness and the happiness of our pupils; their health, by furnishing a little daily exercise of the best kind; their usefulness, by tending to preserve their interest in domestic affairs, and their happiness by being relieved from great dependence upon others. The adoption of a feature like this, in an institution which aims to be better endowed than any existing Seminary in the country for the benefit of ladies, must give it an attitude of noble independence which will exert an elevating influence on its members."

To her friends, she used playfully to say: "This peculiarity will prove a sieve which will exclude the indolent, the fastidious and the weakly, of whom you can never make much," and leave "the finest of the wheat, the energetic, the benevolent and those whose early training has been favorable to usefulness, from whom you may reasonably expect great things."

Now the time had arrived to test her theory. There were many predictions of failure. Fully

determined to refute all objections, and to satisfy all donors, she gave her chief attention, at first, to the domestic department. Although she had never been proficient in household work, she had the tact of Queen Elizabeth, in discovering what everybody was capable of doing, and the skill of a Napoleon, in finding her generals and putting them in the right place. But, then, it would happen that the best person to superintend the dinner-circle belonged to a geometry class that recited at 11 o'clock! What was to be done? It was easier to alter the time of a recitation, than to find a competent person to take the scholar's place upon the dinner-circle. But, when the recitation hour was changed, someone else might be incommoded and another change must be made. Never had Miss Lyon more scope for her inventive powers. But her resources seemed inexhaustible. When, for the twentieth time, the literary and domestic departments interferred she set herself again to readjust her time-table with as much cheerfulness, as she had in constructing it at first.

During the early winter, her powers of body and mind were on the alert from sixteen to eighteen hours out of the twenty-four. From basement to attic, she was in constant demand.



As with Joseph, so with her: "Whatsoever was done in the house, she was the doer of it." It is no small thing for a matron, with well-trained and ready servants, to put and keep everything in order in so large a house, but it is far more to lead eighty scholarly girls to do it. But all had been consecrated to Christ and was regarded by her, as His. Whatever was necessary to the health and comfort of her numerous family, was as vitally connected with His cause, in her view, as the most direct labors for the salvation of souls. Many a winter morning, while it was yet dark and cold, she has left her comfortable room to watch the rising of the bread, with an eye as single to the glory of God as though she had risen to pray. A noble band was that, which gathered in those halls that first year; young maidens of lofty aims, noble impulses and steady devotion to Christ. The Lord magnified their leader in their sight, and helped them to see with her eyes the importance of her plans, and to enter into the work with a zeal scarcely second to her own. How they did delight to rally round such a leader! Imbibing her spirit, their ambition was not so much to gather the greatest possible amount from books, as to vie with each other in the noble strife of sacrifice for the good of the institution.

As Paul was no less an apostle, when stitching the canvas for a tent, than when writing his Epistles, so they, instructed by their Heaventaught guide, felt themselves no less the children of a Heavenly King, when employed at their domestic work, than when worshipping in His courts. "The love of Christ constrained them" in the one case as in the other. Scattered through this and other lands they have, almost without exception, been real workers, serving their day and generation, often with little compensation, save the blessed consciousness of sharing in Christ's work. "Most of these have already reached the goal and received their crown. But here or there, they are sisters all, bound to one another, to their sainted teacher, and to their common Lord by ties invisible, but as indissoluble, as that which bind the satellites to their planets and the planets to their centre."

## VI.

### FIRST GRADUATION.

Nearly all the pupils of the first year were Christian girls, and the senior class were advanced students, when they entered. The first graduation occurred in the latter part of August, 1837.

Thursday morning rose clear and bright. Examinations had all been passed and were well sustained. Miss Lyon, with womanly modesty, shrank from leading her band of maidens to the church, and, so far as propriety would allow, insisted that the address should be given and the diplomas presented in the Seminary Hall. But, however, she submitted this matter to the trustees. They decided in favor of the church, and under their escort, the orator of the day (Dr. Hawes, of Hartford), the teachers, the senior class and the school, walked with heads uncovered, to the village church. The side pews and galleries were already crowded with interested spectators, when Miss Lyon led her beautiful troupe, in quiet dignity, to the seats reserved for them.

It was an hour in her life never to be forgotten.

The battle had been fought! The victory won! Public opinion was in a good degree favorable to her cause. Wonder, gratitude and praise filled her heart with a flood of emotions, such as ordinary minds can faintly conceive. Her great soul was surcharged with pent-up joy. Smiles and tears strove for the mastery on her radiant face. Everything was done to her mind. Dr. Hawes' address was practical and judicious. Her beloved pastor and friend, Rev. Joseph D. Condit, secretary of the Board of Trustees, presented the diplomas to the three eldest—born daughters of the Seminary. Henceforth this trio were to be her fellow-laborers in the work of education. He who made the address, and he who presented the diplomas—she who signed them and those who received them, now mingle their praises before "the great white throne," but the guiding cloud which had hovered over the house, rests permanently within its walls.

Welcome to her, was the Shechinah of the Lord. Henceforth this building was to be her home. Its inmates were to be her children, entrusted to her by their Heavenly Father, to be brought up for Him. Like a true Christian mother, she knew no joy comparable to that of seeing her pupils "walking in the Truth."

## VII.

### METHODS OF GOVERNMENT.

Her mode of government was peculiar. For every principle, she had a scriptural precept or model. When requesting her pupils not to visit each other on the Sabbath, she would say: "It is not in my power to make you keep the day holy in your hearts, but it is our duty to make your circumstances favorable to this;" and then would remind them of the fourth commandment.

Violations of physiological laws, such as thin shoes or tight waists, were shown to be violations of the sixth command, and injuring or not returning borrowed articles, with all careless use of common property, were shown to be forbidden by the eighth. Did she desire to warn against the treachery of a frivolous education, in which the fingers and the feet were chiefly educated, the daughter of Herodias was exactly in point. "This young lady," she would say, "who could move with so much grace and beauty, as to delight the king and his court, could

bear to her mother, in her own delicate hands, the head of John the Baptist. Thus many a young lady appears in the parlor, with angelic sweetness in her face and tones, the admired of all admirers, when she has a moment before, pierced the heart of her mother, with cutting words, or roused the temper of a weary maid by harsh and needless fault-finding."

In so large an establishment many rules were necessary to order and comfort. It was her custom to show that all these were but an offshoot of the first or second great commandment. Family devotion, public worship and private prayer were the natural details of the first. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and putting everything in its place, promptness at meals, faithfulness in domestic duties, were but the details of the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." She was accustomed so to set forth this view, that the heart of that great school would cheerfully respond. Everything, she told us, was to be done, not to the teachers, but to the Lord, and then the most uninteresting household duty would become a sacred privilege.

Most of the young ladies, after observing the rules for a few weeks, saw and felt that they were

adopted and enforced for their happiness. The moral effect on susceptible minds, of bringing conscience to bear so universally and equally on daily life, was very great. If they violated a rule of the school, they saw that they violated the great law of love. This made it easy for them to do right. It made them vigilant without conscious effort.

Miss Lyon kept all the rules of the school herself. The language of her lips, and of her life, was this: "We will all do right together. It is easier to conform to a law ourselves than to oblige others to conform to it. We hope you will not put upon us this painful necessity. We trust each of you will do right of choice—but if any should refuse, we must not forget the case of Eli. He expostulated with his sons, but did not oblige them to mend their ways. How dreadful was the end of the sons, and how awful God's frown upon Eli!

It was more as a family, than as a school, that Miss Lyon governed her pupils. "Family government," she held, "should be mild, undeviating, inflexible, so that, on the part of the parent, nothing should be needful but advice; on the part of the child, nothing but respectful obedience." To this point, year after year, she brought her large family. Occasionally a group of otherwise respectable students would lean the wrong way. While they

would keep the letter of the law, their spirits would be sadly out of tune. In such cases, if a few general remarks did not remedy the evil, she would take them, each one alone, to her room, and set before them the wrong they were doing to themselves and to the beloved institution.

Seldom did she fail to find access, in this way, to the hearts of the most perverse. Having seen her tender regard for them, they often became her closest friends, and were the last to suffer a word against her to be uttered in their presence. In many cases they would say: "Trust me, Miss Lyon, I will never give you any more trouble." But a very few would yield to no remonstrances. When it became necessary, she could use the amputating knife; but it has been said that she could expel a pupil in as good humor as she received one.

"I am sorry for you," she would say, "but the good of this beloved school requires it. God in his government ever consults the good of the whole.' Napoleon, they say, always took it for granted that everybody was selfish. Miss Lyon took it for granted that everyone with whom she had to do, was benevolent. Her own soul was so imbued with love, that she unconsciously attributed it to others, until she had proved it to be otherwise. This assumption seemed to infuse the quality.



When any special work was to be done, for the good of the family, she would not ask, "Is any one willing?" but "How many would like to do this?" When urging a pupil to some self-denying act, like taking an uncongenial or indolent room-mate, it was an understood principle, in all her reasonings, that the young lady addressed had a tender regard for the well-being and personal comfort of the girl in question.

"If we put two unfortunate children together," she would say, "they will surely injure one another. *Somebody* must take pity on them. Who can do it better than you? Some self-denial, no doubt, but, then, we cannot do much without self-denial. I made up my mind on that point many years ago." She would talk in this strain, until the young lady who had been determined not to room with the girl, would go away counting it a privilege. If she were introducing the habit of early rising, she would say: "People who run around all day to overtake half an hour that they lost in the morning, never accomplish much. You may always know them by the rip in the glove, a string pinned to the bonnet, or a shawl on the bannister which they had no time to put away. But it is a fruitless race. Lost time can never be recovered. You have come here to make the most of your

time. You can never do this without system, and you cannot secure this without a regular hour for rising. Decide upon some hour. If your hour is five, you should be on your feet before the clock has done striking. Otherwise, you are tardy, and you lose some self-respect in consequence. Don't set the time too early. It would be better for you to decide to rise at six, when you might rise at five, than to fail of meeting your own appointment. Early rising for each individual is rising at the earliest time proper for her, under existing circumstances. The hour should not be selected in the delicious dreaminess of the half-waking, but when you are up and awake, with all your powers in vigorous exercise. It is better for those who require more sleep than others, to take it in the early part of the night."

When she thought they were prepared to make a wise decision, she asked them to rise, and be seated again as soon as they had chosen their rising hour for the next week. In the freshness of morning, with minds unclouded by over-study or unhealthy excitement, they usually decided on a much earlier hour than she would have selected for them. But the irresolute and indolent were unable to decide. With such, and with any who were unamiable and inclined to "stand it out,"

she was patient, and willing to stand as long as they did. When all had signified that their decision was made, they were instructed to write it down and hand it to her. One of the first inquiries on the succeeding day would be: "How did you succeed, young ladies, about rising at the hour you set?" A large majority would be found to have kept their resolutions, and the delinquents could complain of no one but themselves. Having broken their own rules, and fallen short of their own standard, they could not but feel self-condemned. *It is a fact, abundantly illustrated, that character so moulded grows astonishingly in grace and excellence.*

## VIII.

### PLANS FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN GROWTH.

It was an essential part of Miss Lyon's purpose to situate her pupils favorably for growth in grace, if they desired it. Even in the erection of the original building, she made such arrangements, that each one could be alone, and entirely free from intrusion half an hour in the morning and the same time before retiring. They were quite free to spend it as they chose, and in making their reports were never asked how they had used it, but simply whether they had been undisturbed and guiltless of disturbing others. In her morning instruction in the hall, she spoke of the precept of the Saviour: "Enter into thy closet," and made suggestions as to the best manner of improving the time. No illustration can do justice to her teachings, but they were much in the following strain: "Read a small portion of God's Word and ask for His spirit to help you to get all his meaning. Don't think you must read a certain number of verses. Cultivate a receptive attitude, and read

till you come to something that especially attracts you. I think it is better to read in course. You will be more likely to read regularly. It is surprising how those, who are led by the spirit of God, find in a regular course of reading, just the instruction they especially need."

Again, she would say, "Before you kneel, consider just what you most need, and use any words that come most naturally, spreading everything before Him. Remember your mercies. Render thanks for His goodness, and when love comes into your soul *tell* Jesus that you love Him and give yourself to Him. Pray for others. Pray for them by name. Make your petition definite, rather than general. What an unspeakable privilege to speak alone to the King, in the name of an acceptable Mediator." At these appointed seasons, their seclusion was as perfect as though they had been on Tabor's hill. The school was divided into sections, each one being committed to a teacher, whose duty it was to have special oversight of the manners, conduct and religious welfare of those belonging to her section.

No extra means were ever employed. A person might live there for weeks, during a time of special interest, and discover nothing unusual, except, perhaps, more tenderness during religious exercises. The religious interest would never be introduced to

the visitor, unless he expressed a special interest. Then he would find a fountain, ready to overflow when the channel was opened, and he would see that in their closets lay the secret of the constant descent of the Spirit.

A missionary meeting was monthly maintained. Its object was to disseminate the latest information in regard to the moral and religious condition of the world. Letters from missionaries, who had gone from these halls, formed a set of electric wires, through which the missionary spirit was transmitted.

Personal consecration is the strongest evidence of interest, but money-giving is also an index, and it is remarkable that the annual offering in the early years, ranged from six to eleven hundred dollars, although the salaries of the teachers never exceeded two hundred dollars, and the pupils were, many of them, the daughters of ministers and other men of limited means. Miss Lyon always said: "Be satisfied with nothing but the Bible standard of giving. He knows your circumstances. Answer to Him. I don't believe in the maxim, 'Never the poorer for giving to the Lord,' unless it means spiritually poor. Then I fully indorse it, but we ought to give, until we are the poorer in dollars and cents."

## IX.

### CO-OPERATION OF TEACHERS.

Miss Lyon's teachers warmly endorsed her methods. If they had not, they could, to a great extent, have counteracted her efforts. She had carefully guarded against this. At her suggestion, the Trustees, from the first, adopted the rule that the right of appointing the teachers should be vested in the principal. On no consideration would she have taken the responsibility of a school where this was not conceded. Her teachers must be a trained band, with congenial views.

The first year all were from the Ipswich school. After that they were selected from her own graduates. Like her, they wished to labor, not for money or for fame, but to benefit the world. In selecting them her first question was not, "Are you of one religious denomination or another;" but, "Are you like the Master, willing to make yourself poor that others, through your poverty, may be rich?"

They could have commanded large salaries elsewhere, but money was not the motive which kept them at that *alma mater*. However they might

differ in tastes and attainments, they all believed this to be a model school, especially in giving the Bible the first place in its list of studies, and in the methods of discipline adopted. They kept constantly in mind, that at the winding up of life's drama, they and their pupils are not to be asked how much Latin and algebra they knew, but whether they had loved and followed Christ, and were united to Him as "the branch is united to the vine." They believed that the sense of accountability to God would secure a higher standard of study among the young ladies than any method drawn from the world of time and sense.

At the weekly meeting of these teachers there was, we are told, no discord. They seemed to see "eye to eye." Miss Lyon mingled with them, as an older sister, ever ready to receive their suggestions. No slurs on unsuccessful scholars were allowed.

"Speak of them as sisters," was Miss Lyon's oft-repeated injunction, and the precept was observed in letter and in spirit. The progress of the young ladies in whatever was "lovely and of good report" was reported here, and the extra effort necessary, on behalf of those who were not making the best use of their time, was apportioned among them. A certain pastoral care was exercised by them all.



## X.

### ENDS ACCOMPLISHED.

At the commencement of the present century the standard of female education was low, as proven by the statistics of the National Board of Education. A trio of ladies appeared with advanced thoughts upon the subject: Emma Hart, afterwards Mrs. Willard, of Troy, N. Y., born in 1787; Mary Lyon, ten years later, and Catherine Beecher in 1800. Their style and methods were different, but they were equally in earnest.

With Mrs. Willard the esthetic element was dominant. Miss Beecher, perhaps the greatest genius of the three, was least concentrated in her plans, and chose the Western States as her field. Miss Lyon's leading thought was to prepare consecrated minds for the service of Christ in the great work of elevating humanity.

In 1838 private benevolence placed \$10,000 at the disposal of Horace Mann, secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, towards establishing a state school for the special training

of teachers, and in 1839 such a school was planted at Lexington in that State. But Ipswich and Holyoke had for years been earnestly engaged in that work, and many of their pupils were already employed. Others were building homes in destitute American fields, and some were shedding light on foreign shores. Deeply convinced that neither men of science, merchant princes or busy politicians could regenerate the world, without the effective ministry of mothers rising early and sowing good seed, nipping vice in the bud and maintaining the cause of God as their own, she sought daily to impress it on others.

We regard Miss Lyon as one of the founders of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. Before leaving her native town she organized a society of young ladies "For the enlargement of Zion's Tabernacle"—and with her youthful coadjutors canvassed their rural district for members.

Mrs. Bowker, of Boston, first president of the New England Branch, always referred to Miss Lyon as "The source of her inspiration," and many others would give similar testimony. But although her desires embraced the world, she neglected nothing she could do at home. While speeding workers to the foreign field, she sent many more every year to needy places in our own

country, and in regard to many of them she was especially enthusiastic. She quotes from one:

“With my baby on my knee I am teaching seventeen pupils. Have already sent out several teachers and others are preparing to go.”

In the autumn of 1848 she missed from her staff of teachers three, on whom she had much relied: Miss Abigail Moore was married to Rev. Ebenezer Burgess, of Satara, India; Miss Maude Chapin to Rev. Allen Hagen, of Ahmednagar, and Miss Lucy Lyon to Rev. Edward C. Lord, missionary to China. Two of these were her own nieces. They were all greatly blessed in their labors abroad, but she sadly missed them. In addition to the journal, which was kept for them in the Seminary, Miss Lyon wrote, occasionally, what she called a circular letter, to her daughters in foreign lands, from one of which we extract a few sentences to show how she kept in touch with them all:

“I will not refer to passing events, as I know you are kept informed of these—nor can I tell you any new truths or repeat new promises which God has given to light the feet of pilgrims to the Celestial City, but I would like to tell you how God is fulfilling His promises to me, and how He is visiting the Seminary, not with

the whirlwind or the fire, but with the still small voice of the Spirit. May you all be rich in faith and in labor, at last receiving a crown of glory which shall never fade away."

But Miss Lyon's chief work was always in the Seminary. Among the careless, one year, were thirty who had listened to Miss Lyon's instructions before, and it was feared that they were Gospel-hardened, and sixty newly entered, who did not consider themselves Christians, making nearly ninety in all. Miss Lyon was accustomed to spend an hour with these each Sabbath evening. But a heavy cold confined her for weeks to her room. One of the other teachers took her place, but she became much discouraged, and said she could not again undertake to secure their attention. Then a band of youthful Christians volunteered their assistance, and a wonderful work was wrought. Some say it is wonderful how the blessing of God, in converting power, seemed always to rest upon that school. But *is* it wonderful, in view of the fact that the teachers were united in seeking "first the kingdom of God?"

## XI.

### LAST DAYS.

Although, when one's life has been single-eyed or the glory of God, the circumstances of their death are really of little importance. Yet, to those who knew Miss Lyon and to such as have become interested in her character, through testimony, even these are full of interest.

A few weeks before the close of her life she seemed providentially led to her chosen retreat in Monson, with Deacon and Mrs. Porter, whose friendship she greatly prized, and who always secured for her the retirement she desired. She accepted their hospitality most gratefully, as from Heaven's own hand, and regarded it as needful preparation for earthly duties. In this case, however, it was to fit her for a higher sphere.

To her niece in India she wrote: "I am taking an old-fashioned vacation, in this sweetest of resting places. I can read or write, ride or visit, with nothing to disturb me, and with scarcely a thought of home, except as I pray

that the Holy Spirit may dwell there. My health is unusually good, but at all times, whether my strength is more or less, I realize that I am fast hastening to my eternal home.

“I hope, however, that I may have more work to do upon earth, and that it all may be faithfully done. By grace we have been redeemed, by grace we are sanctified; every one’s work is appointed, and by grace alone we have the strength and heart to do it. This doctrine of grace is more and more precious to me now, and what will it be hereafter, when we stand with our ‘robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb!’ My work, as you know, is made up of an almost endless variety of nameless duties interwoven and often complicated. It is a goodly heritage of labor, but every hour I feel the need of an internal force that is divine to carry me on in the right path. When, in the midst of my work, I am unexpectedly called from one thing to another, I whisper in my heart: ‘Lord, help me to be patient, and in all things to be faithful.’ How amazing it is that grace allows us to do all for Christ, and permits us always to pray in His name.”

Miss Whitman was at this time absent from the Seminary, on account of impaired health, and in

writing to her, Miss Lyon says: "I have been thinking that we might rest and read together, somewhere among the mountains, during our next vacation. So, you see, I am looking forward to another rest in the autumn."

She found rest, but not upon earth. Her autumn months were to be spent amid celestial scenes—in companionship with Christ himself and the spirits of the just made perfect, some of whom she had guided to that blessed home. In March one of the young ladies had a severe attack of influenza. Erysipelas of malignant type set in. Miss Lyon had also been suffering from influenza, which was very prevalent at that time, but she insisted on being with the sick one, making all arrangements for conveying the intelligence, as quickly and gently as possible, to her friends, and met the young ladies in the Hall, both morning and evening. She found them naturally much excited, fearing an epidemic, and soothed and quieted them in the most motherly way. Addressing herself to the assembled school, she said:

"I look upon all distressing anxiety about the future as indicative of distrust in God"—adding those words, since placed upon her monument: "There is nothing in the Universe that I fear, but that I shall not know all my duty, or shall fail

to do it." She then turned their attention from the painful circumstances, and seemed to follow the dying one to the gates of the Celestial City, which stood open to receive her, exclaiming, "If I were in her place how happy I should be to go in," but quickly added, "Not that I would be unclothed, while I can do anything for you." She then addressed the impenitent in a most impressive manner, expressing her gratitude that the one called for, was not of their number, and said with much feeling: "If one of you had been in her place, I could not have gone down with you to that world of despair. It would have been too painful for me, and I should have felt that I must draw the veil and leave you." She then urged them to enter at once on the loving service of Christ, not through fear of death, but in view of His lovely character and His infinite claims upon them. The next morning she was very sick herself, and grew rapidly worse. Those in attendance were alarmed. Her pastor called. For a moment his voice recalled her, but reason soon fled. He bent over and said: "Is Christ precious to you now?" She lifted both hands and replied audibly and with emphasis, "Yes." This was her last rational word. He repeated short sentences from God's Word, and, for the moment, she seemed to un-



derstand and appreciate them. Those which referred to the glory of God seemed to interest her most. She tried to speak, but could not. Mr. Laurie said: "Don't try. God can be glorified by silence," and she responded with a smile. An hour later her freed spirit was mingling in the glories of heaven. We would not recall her; rather would we be thankful for the life so long bestowed.

Funeral services were held in the village church into which, on anniversary occasions, she had so often led her band of white-robed maidens. Dr. Humphrey, of Amherst College, preached from the double text: "The path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," and "The memory of the just is blessed." The procession moved to the place chosen for burial—on Seminary ground—a little south of the orchard, where it could be distinctly seen from the rooms on that side of the building. It is a sacred spot and has been visited by thousands. Soon after, a monument of Italian marble was erected, a square column resting on a pedestal of granite. The inscriptions are as follows:

MARY LYON,  
THE FOUNDER OF  
MOUNT HOLYOKE FEMALE SEMINARY,  
AND  
FOR TWELVE YEARS, ITS PRINCIPAL.  
—  
A TEACHER FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS  
OF  
MORE THAN THREE THOUSAND PUPILS.  
—  
BORN FEBRUARY 28TH, 1797.  
DIED MARCH 5TH, 1849.  
—

On the north side:

“Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let  
her own works praise her in the gates.”

On the south side:

“Servant of God, well done;  
Rest from thy lov'd employ;  
The battle fought, the victory won,  
Enter thy Master's joy—”

On the east side, the trustees directed to be  
placed her own emphatic words:

“There is nothing in the Universe that I fear,  
but that I shall not know all my duty, or shall  
fail to do it.”

## XII.

### TESTIMONIALS AFTER DEATH.

We gather a few extracts from Dr. Humphreys' sermon and Dr. Hitchcock's anniversary address the following year.

Dr. Humphreys says: "Her mind was of high order,—clear, strong and well-balanced. It is very rare to find such strength and order controlled by the best common sense. Taken all in all, I hardly dare to express the high estimation which my long acquaintance constrains me to cherish, lest I should seem to exaggerate. I certainly should not express it, but in the presence of those who have had equal or better opportunities for marking her radiant and upward course. Yet it was the moral and religious in Miss Lyon's character that eclipsed all her other endowments. To say that she was eminently benevolent is not enough. She seemed the very embodiment of love. In humble imitation of Christ, she manifested it in face and conduct wherever she went, not consulting her

own convenience. I appeal to all who knew her beneficent course from early life, if she did not live incomparably more for others, than she did for herself. I do not believe that a single being can recall an instance in which, since she entered on her bright career, she seemed to be actuated by selfishness, but all the thousands who knew her, might be challenged to show that she ever, by word or deed, seemed to prefer her own advantage to the good of others."

Dr. Hitchcock says: "It is just to state, in regard to her mind, that there was an unusual development of all the powers without the predominance of any; and yet she had most striking traits. She possessed, in a peculiar degree, the ability to seize the main points and master the principles on which a subject rested. She did not so naturally attend to details, but finding this to be indispensable, she yielded with so good a grace that she seemed to be following an instinct of her nature. Without this, she could never have excelled as she did, in the laboratory or in planning the Seminary building. The inventive powers were notably developed, not the poetic, but the ability to devise means for overcoming difficulties. Truthful as an echo, and clear as the sky on a sunny day, she was always controlled by good judgment.

“What an amount of labor has been lost in this world for want of discretion! Rarely did she lose any effort for lack of this, though her sagacity was often severely tested. It was a great trial to her, that she sometimes felt compelled to act contrary to the judgment of those she much esteemed, but having carefully and prayerfully surveyed the ground, the path seemed radiant to her eyes, though to others it might be enveloped in mist; and it is but justice to say, that almost every one ultimately acknowledged her wisdom. She possessed, in a remarkable degree, the power of mental abstraction. When engaged on an important subject no truant thoughts or irritated nerves seemed ever to intrude, nor could the external world break up her almost mesmeric concentration. She also possessed a peculiar power of controlling other minds. Before you were aware, her well-woven net of real argument was over you, and you felt that the fingers of love and knowledge had woven it,—that she was actuated by most benevolent motives, and that it was hazardous for you to resist so much light and love. Her energy was a placid power, yet it had great strength. It might fail of success to-day, but she could quietly wait till to-morrow. But, after all that has been said, her religious convictions were her chief motive power.

“In ordinary acquaintance, one would rarely perceive how deep and pure was her loyalty to Christ, as the foundation of her piety,—but I have looked back over my long acquaintance with her to find a single instance, in which she manifested unchristian feeling or showed the lurkings of worldly pride or selfish ambition, and I confess I cannot remember one. They might have existed, but it needed a keener moral vision than I had, to discover them. There were two principles which always controlled her,—a sense of personal responsibility, and faith in the loving providence of God. These convictions led her, in the early morning of her day, to regard knowledge ‘more precious than silver,’ and to discipline all her powers, polishing her armor, for the battle of life.

“Conscious that her hand was placed in the hand of the Infinite Father, she took step by step with as much confidence as though an iron pavement was before her, and her life was always approaching a climax. Each step seemed a gain on the preceding. One extract from her ‘Missionary Offering’ will show how deeply the sense of personal responsibility possessed her: ‘I felt that my duty in my own little sphere was more to me, in the sight of God, than the duty to the whole world beside. If I could throw my influence over the whole country,

and bring thousands into the treasury of the Lord, it might not be so important a duty for me, as to give from my own little purse, the last farthing which God requires. Could I so plead in behalf of the heathen that all our churches should be filled with hearts bowed in the presence of God, it might not be so important a duty for me, as to carry my own feeble petition to the throne of grace.'

“Her uniform cheerfulness was one element of her power. No doubt her remarkable health contributed largely to this. But, more than that, she was conscious of God's approval. She knew that she meant to promote the good and the happiness of others, and that, therefore, God approved of her conduct. She expected the final reward from Him, therefore perverseness or ingratitude in others only brought her nearer to Him. What an example for our imitation! Most of us try to mix selfishness and benevolence,—principles as repellant as oil and water,—and the result is, we are double-minded, inconsistent and unhappy.

“Given, purity of motive and convictions that we are in the path of duty, any one may attain at least a measure of her success in life. It was God's gift to Mary Lyon, and just as surely will be ours. A great motive is essential to happiness, and this she early possessed. Therefore, she was

radiant with hope. One who knew her well has said: 'Never did I see a cloud upon her face.' Through 'the telescope of faith she could always see clear sky.'

"As a teacher of science and literature, she possessed great versatility of talents, and was distinguished for thorough work. Those who have attended the examinations of her classes have been convinced of this. On one occasion, after the senior class had recited to Miss Lyon in Butler's Analogy, we remarked the conversation between two college presidents. One said: 'How is it that these young ladies recite better in this, than our young men?' 'I do not know,' he replied, 'unless they have a better teacher.'

"Whatever she taught, she did it with an enthusiasm which her pupils, of necessity, shared. Better than most of us, she knew her own deficiencies. One may possess the rarest gifts, and yet for the lack of a few may fail in their life work. One or two small leaks will sink the largest ship, unless foreseen and provided against.

"Miss Lyon began life under many disadvantages, and was originally a crude force in comparison with many others. She felt her deficiencies, and with energy and courage, aided by a happy disposition, she took herself in hand, determined



to conquer her undesirable self, and on the ruins of her conquest to build a brave and lovable woman, 'fit for the Master's use.' After passing a period of mental drill, mainly practiced upon herself, after extended culture and much experience, she found that she still lacked some constitutional traits. She knew there were some details she could not most successfully conduct, and she set herself to seek out those who could. 'Great to plan, less perfect in detail, she wrought the system into perfect whole, but gave the work to others, who could fit the parts with more facility than she. As chief commander, few her peers. None better knew to choose her aids; here lies the secret of a grand and useful life.'

"It was a scene of moral grandeur when, on the fiftieth anniversary of her birth, she looked out upon hundreds of women laboring for the world, who had been converted through her instrumentality, and not less than three thousand disseminating the truths which she had taught them. Nor could she fail to see the widening influence of the new Seminary until 'the world shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.'

"The picture is complete. Her life was neither too long or too short. She died at the right time, while her armor was bright. She was beginning to feel the limitations of time. I would not like to

call her back. Rather would I be borne on angels' wings to Mount Zion, where she dwells, and hear her speak of the wonders of Providence in her earthly course as she sees them now in the transparencies of Heaven. I would like to know how her earthly discipline fitted her for her present sphere of labor in the kingdom of God, and whether in some way, as yet unfolded to us, she does not still minister to her beloved Seminary.

"Alas! these aspirations are vain; but if we are faithful, as was our glorified friend, our song and our communion will be the music and intercourse of Heaven, and that will be enough."\*

In a notice of Miss Lyon, soon after her death, Miss Lyman, of Montreal, at that time lady principal of Vassar College, asks: "Is she missed? Scarcely a State in the American Union but contains those whom she had trained. Ere this, amid the hunting-grounds of the Sioux, and the villages of the Cherokees, the tear of the missionary has wet the page which told of her departure. The Sandwich Islander has asked, why his white teacher's eye is dim, as she reads her American letters? The swarthy African laments, with his sorrowing guide, who cries, 'Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth.' The cinnamon groves of Ceylon and the

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\*President Hitchcock, "Entered Into Life," February, 1864.

palm trees of India will over-shadow her deceased daughters, while those left to bear the burden and heat of the day will weep for one whose prayers and letters they so highly prized. Among the Nestorians of Persia, and at the base of Mt. Olympus, will her name be softly breathed as the household name of one whom God hath taken. We can only add the eloquent tribute of Rev. Dr. Culyer after the graduating exercises in 1879, and even this we must epitomize: 'That procession of nearly three hundred white-robed maidens was, to my mind, a triumphal procession in honor of Mary Lyon. Her body has been resting in yonder grove for more than thirty years, but she was the pioneer of the highest education for American women! That crown belongs to her! Others, like Harriet Hosmer, have handled the chisel, like Marion Mitchell, the telescope, and the pen like Mrs. Stowe, but the life of Mary Lyon was an epic—an added verse to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. She was a heroine. Not only did she teach her pupils the higher branches of literature, but she taught to labor and to pray, 'to suffer and be strong.' Scores of pastors' wives have been trained at Holyoke, and more than seventy foreign missionaries have already gone from her classes.

“So many wives and daughters of missionaries were present, that it almost seemed like a meeting of the American Board—and all through the halls and art galleries was breathed a gladsome spiritual atmosphere. I visited the grave in the grove, near Williston Hall. Near by, was a tiny lake, on which the young women exercise their muscles with the oar. A well-developed three hundred they were. So admirable is their regimen, that there has not been a death in the institution for ten years. But I stood by the monument—a plain block of marble! I read the inscriptions, and thought of the motto she used to give to her graduating classes: ‘When you choose your fields of labor, go where nobody else is willing to go.’ What a seed-corn that is, for holy consecration to Christ! It has germinated into some of the noblest lives which America has furnished. As I stood there, I felt the same thrill, as when I stood by the historic hay-stack, where the American Board was born.”

### XIII.

#### ABIDING INFLUENCES.

Alumni Associations, in different parts of the country, have done much to preserve Miss Lyon's influence. A few of the testimonials are recalled, which were given at a meeting of the Northwestern Association, held at the Grand Pacific Hotel, in Chicago.

One lady, after the lapse of thirty years, says: "I think a day seldom passes, that I do not think of Miss Lyon." Another, after the expiration of thirty-six years: "Her teachings are still invaluable to me, and more and more as age advances." And the compiler of this sketch, after fifty years, can bear a similar testimony.

Miss Lyon sent but one book to the publishers, but she wrote many in the hearts of her pupils. One says: "Mount Holyoke Seminary seemed to me a memorial of prayer. The cornerstone would never have been laid but for prevailing prayer. The study of "The Word" as a me-

dium of communication with God is well presented in another extract.

“Mary Lyon! I seem to see her coming from her room to Seminary Hall, Bible in hand, her body and soul aglow with light—every act proclaiming, ‘By the spirit of the Lord the work is to be done.’ Then she ‘opened to us the Scriptures, with the realization of a great heart.’”

Another:

“That voice so touchingly tender,  
Comes down to me thro’ the years;  
A pathos seems to mingle  
Her own, with her Savior’s tears.”

“Her own large-hearted benevolence impressed her pupils through the whole of their seminary course. Thirty-five years have passed, since I looked upon her face. Of all the noble band of women who sat on either side of her, none stand out quite so distinctly in my mind, as Lucy Lyon and Fidelia Fiske. Together, they embodied my ideas of Faith, Hope and Charity. Miss Fiske’s clear tones and patiently waiting manner suited well her name,—Fidelia. Miss Lucy’s force and buoyancy placed her second in my group. ‘But the greatest of these is Charity,’ and Miss Lyon, greatest of American women, crowns with beauty all my remembrances.”

“She wonderfully impressed us all with the value

of time, an impression which has remained with me through all the years. Who could forget how she would sometimes stand at the table, with one hand on the chair of a delinquent until she appeared, and then remark, 'One minute lost by ninety persons, makes ninety minutes forever gone.'"

"A personal centre is the strongest of bonds," and this was proven at Mount Holyoke. When she thought occasion called for it, she was very sympathetic—shall I say *magnetic*?"

One writes: "I had greatly desired to attend the Seminary. At last, the way was opened, and I was delighted. But I soon found that my strength was not equal to the appointed tasks. She observed this, and in regard to my domestic work, which I had considered very light, she said, 'You need not do it any more. Instead of that, you may do a little needle-work for me.' But my health continued to fail, and I knew I must go home. I shall never forget the tenderness with which she said, 'I know it is a great disappointment to you, but you are not strong, and you must not try to do *great* things. Just creep along as you can—Jesus knows all about it.' This I have been trying to do ever since, and yet it has been my privilege to do something for the Master, of which this is not the place to speak."

Should any one say, "This was an exceptional case," we reply, "It certainly was." But, we apprehend, that all her pupils passed before her kindly inspection with the same individuality.

Take another case of a different kind. One of the young ladies told me, that she was standing by a window, feeling lonely and sad, when Miss Lyon, passing by, said, "I think you want to see your mother." She replied, "I have no mother." Miss Lyon put her arms around her, and said, "I will be a mother to you. Come to me at any time, as you would go to her, if she were here."

When some useless fashion appeared, and some of the young ladies returned after vacation, having adopted the extreme, her surcharged battery of humor sometimes flashed sallies of pleasantry, very amusing. Sarcasm is a sharp tool, and, in her earlier years, she sometimes used it, to eradicate follies; but, regarding it as liable to be too severe, she laid it almost entirely aside, in riper years.

"She indelibly impressed upon us the power of little things, the multitude of apparent trifles, which in most cases make up the whole of life, and that the secret of true happiness lies in forgetting self and living for others."

Most of the friction in society comes by the departure from the accepted principles of action,



either consciously or unconsciously, from selfish motives. Miss Lyon, as quoted by one, puts it in this way:

“It is astonishing how many favorite children there are, and for how many reasons; one, because she is the only child; another, the youngest of the family, or under the care of her grandmother, or her name is Abbie! Why, it would not be strange if some of you had been favorites of somebody! Now, many times you will want some special privilege. Just ask yourself, candidly, would it be reasonable to grant this to a hundred others? If not, should I ask for it?” But here it should be said, that, although so strenuous in regard to general principles, no one could be more ready, for sufficient reasons, to relax the home laws.

*Her law was, emphatically, love.*

## XIV.

### MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE.

This institution, first chartered as Mount Holyoke Seminary, was begun in a very quiet way, but since it laid the foundation of all American colleges for women, the significance of the movement, will never be known until the history of the nations shall be ended. As a cultivator of public sentiment, its work was done within the first half century. Not only had similar schools been planted all over our own country, but Europe, Asia, and even Africa, had small centers from which like influences were spreading. Public sentiment called loudly for advantages equal in every respect to those offered to young men—and Vassar, Wellesley and Smith, with their throngs of students, witnessed to the world, that the needs of woman were recognized as never before.

The question whether this Seminary should become a college was often discussed. Some were too conservative to favor the change. They said:

“Let us extend the course, but remain a Seminary.” A compromise was finally made and there was to be both a Seminary and a Collegiate course. The first year, out of three hundred pupils, only eleven belonged to the collegiate department, while in 1892 only eight applied for the seminary course, and the name was changed to Mt. Holyoke College. Thus in the face of opposition the problem worked itself out: Shall we not rather say, that He into whose hands the founder had placed it, worked out her purpose, that here should be given the highest education?

The Mary Lyon fund, for the endowment of the President's chair, was now completed and Miss Elizabeth Blanchard who had been for five years Principal of the Seminary, was appointed Acting President. It was soon evident that her health was failing, and a leave of absence was granted for the following year. But vigor did not return and she died in Boston November 29th, 1891. To this part of Christ's vineyard she had given the best years of her life, and her memory is hallowed. The eyes of the Trustees, then turned to Miss Brigham, who for twenty years had been Associate Principal of the Seminary on Brooklyn Heights. Her acceptance gave



promise of a bright future, but a railroad disaster summoned her to the immediate presence of the King.

Miss Louisa Cowles, Professor of Geology, was requested to act as President for the year. Reluctantly she took up the burden, nobly sustained by every member of the Faculty.

In the early part of that year occurred the death of Miss Lydia Shattuck, Professor Emeritus of Botany. The hundreds who had filled her classes will ever keep her memory green.

In the spring of 1890 the announcement was made that Mrs. Elizabeth Storrs Mead had accepted the position of President. Admirably fitted by native gifts and broad culture, this announcement was eagerly received. To eleven classes, her husband, as Secretary of the Board of Trustees, had presented the diplomas and this memory added interest to the occasion when Mrs. Mead, as President, performed the same office.

Great advances have been made in the standard of scholarship—a broad range of elective studies have been introduced, also what is known as “The Group System,” and, in the judgment of the most competent persons, Mount Holyoke College stands to-day in the front rank for the broadest, noblest culture that a woman can secure.

## THE BOSTON CONGREGATIONALIST

Amid all that is new, the supreme idea of Mary Lyon permeates every fiber of the institution which she founded. "Holiness to the Lord" is still the motto of all the managers.

Chiefly from *The Boston Congregationalist* the following section is abridged:

On the 27th of September, 1896, the Mount Holyoke Seminary was destroyed by fire.

Readers of the morning papers, as they read the headlines, undoubtedly paused long enough to regret this loss to "The Mother of Colleges."

In due time the tidings found their way to her graduates, in India, Turkey, China and Japan, to the Spanish girls at San Sabastian, and the American schools for girls on the shores of the Bosphorus; wherever Holyoke women were holding up the ideals of the gospel. Everywhere a sense of bereavement was felt. Many students had already been turned away for want of room, and this edifice had so many cherished associations. Still, it was but one of a group of more modern buildings that had grown up around it.

Dr. Pearson, a princely giver to educational institutions, had offered \$50,000 for an endowment fund on condition that \$150,000 more could be secured, and the Alumni Associations all over the country had been endeavoring to se-

cure more extensive accommodations. The correspondence was in the competent hands of Miss Anna C. Edwards, for many years an honored Associate Principal, and of Miss Louisa F. Cowles, Secretary of the National Alumni Association.

The Lyman Williston Hall, built by the munificence of Mr. Williston, of Northampton, and the Hall of Science, dedicated to the memory of Miss Shattuck, had already been erected, as also an observatory by Mr. Williston in memory of his son. One group of Alumni, in and around New York and Brooklyn, had expressed their determination to build a Mary Brigham Hall. But hitherto the majority had roomed in the original building. What could be done?

Not until now, did they know the breadth of South Hadley hospitality. The relation between the "town and the gown" had always been pleasant, but now one after another came forward, offering to take from one to a dozen to his home, and soon every one was provided for. Not only did the fire reveal the hospitality of the people, but the quality of the girls.

The President says: "The old Mount Holyoke spirit of unselfishness seemed to animate them all. Even the exit from the burning building was

not so much a flight as an orderly retreat. There was literally no panic or uproar, and no one seemed to be mourning her own losses, although in some cases they were deprived of everything but the clothes they had on.

The next morning, while the ruins were still smoking, they assembled in the village church, almost as calmly as though they had been in their accustomed place. Mrs. Mead spoke reassuring words and when the roll had been called, the college spirit broke forth in the song beginning: "Holyoke, oh, Holyoke." Every one felt thankful that the library, which was the gift of Mrs. Durand, of Wellesley, the Williston Hall, with its paintings and art treasures, the Science Hall, with its valuable apparatus, and the Observatory, with its fine telescope, were spared to them, and all the classes convened as usual on the following day.

The Trustees in their meeting were at once confronted with the question whether the old idea should be enshrined in one structure, large enough to shelter the entire college, or the more modern plan of several smaller edifices be adopted? They decided on the latter, not, however, to lack a unifying center. The Administration Building, with the Chapel, which will be known as Mary Lyon

Hall, will be central in the group, and there all the common interests of the college will be focused. A recent gift of twenty-five acres from Hon. E. A. Goodnow, of Worcester, Mass., affords them ample space (the grounds now containing about one hundred acres), and a noted landscape gardener ensures a picturesque arrangement and the preservation of cherished landmarks.

Miss Lyon's monument, surrounded by fine old trees, will always be a shrine, before which many will stand with bowed heads and reverent hearts, and near by will be four new dormitories, the Pearsons, the Rockefeller, the Safford and the Porter, all named for munificent donors to the institution.

There will be a new Mount Holyoke, but it will never part company with the old. The same ideals prevail, and never was personal influence more effective than now. Girls will come, as in days gone by, to be instructed in earthly lore by the most competent teachers, and will learn at the same time, what to do with their education when they get it. Simplicity and earnest purpose will continue to animate the life within those walls—and the graduates of the future, as those of the past, will consecrate the ripe and beautiful fruits of their training to the service of others.



How can man or woman of wealth better honor the Master whom they love, and Mary Lyon, his faithful servant, than by speeding the work so nobly begun? How can those of moderate resources deny themselves the privilege, of smaller gifts, to a training school, which so nobly represents the ideals upon which our country is dependent for its safety.











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